

Sethusamudram Project and Adams Bridge

3137. SHRI MAHMOOD A. MADANI: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) what is the schedule of completion of the Sethusamudram Project;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the project would harm Adams Bridge, the heritage link between India and Sri Lanka;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that Government have received objections in this respect;
- (d) if so, whether such objections have been dispelled;
- (e) whether Government have consulted the marine archaeologists and satellite imagery to avoid any harm to the heritage Adams Bridge;
- (f) if so, what has been their view;
- (g) whether Government have explored more viable alternative route for Sethusamudram; and
- (h) if so, the details thereof and if no the reasons therefor?.

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) As per the Detailed Project Report (DPR), the project is scheduled to be completed by November, 2008.

(b) There is no scientific evidence regarding the existence of any ancient man-made structure in the proposed Sethusamudram Ship Channel alignment.

(c) and (d) Representations against undertaking the project have been received. However, as per the scientific information available with the Project Authorities, there is no underwater construction in the project area.

(e) and (f) As per the information available no heritage site has been declared in the project area.

(g) and (h) Final selection of the alignment has been done keeping in view various aspects including the navigational, environmental and ecological considerations.